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COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

Eighth session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 11th MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Friday, 21 May 1993, at 3 p.m.

Chairperson: Mr. ALSTON

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK (agenda item 2) (continued)

1. The CHAIRPERSON urged the Committee to give some thought to improving the dialogue with States parties which had sent representatives. The list of issues sent to States, and even the oral questions in Committee, were too wide-ranging, enabling representatives to give general or evasive answers. Both the Committee and the State concerned should recognize what the Covenant called the "factors and difficulties" that existed and the Committee should then ask detailed questions regarding the most pressing problems and request statistics to back up the State's assertions. In many countries there were people whose basic economic rights were not protected in the short term. The Committee's responsibility was, while taking account of a State's specific problems, to ask what measures it was taking to help the worst affected. He stressed that he was not criticizing individual members of the Committee; his aim was to evoke a more insightful set of responses. The test was whether the people of the State concerned, reading the summary record, would feel that the Committee had asked the right questions and elicited truthful or helpful answers. He added that more help was needed from the secretariat in the provision of dossiers and in the identification of relevant issues. As matters stood, it was difficult for members to inform themselves adequately and thereby to ask the questions that needed to be asked. Non-governmental organizations were also useful in that respect and he hoped that the measures the Committee had taken would increase their usefulness still further.

2. Mr. SIMMA, agreeing, recalled that in 1987 to 1988 two thirds of countries had got away with answering questions only in the most general terms. It was important that members should do outside research, although he recognized that it was easier for him than for many others. Those with less access to research facilities needed more help from the secretariat, with material that went beyond that existing in the country files, which contained little of value. He suggested that those members with experience of international organizations - specifically the Chairperson, Mr. Grissa and himself - should produce a brief guide on how to go about research, how to obtain UNDP or UNICEF reports, and so on. He also reminded members that the Committee had put out guidelines, which the list of issues often did not reflect; the quality of answers received was a function of the quality of questions posed.

3. Mr. GRISSA said that as a new member he was still learning the ropes; but in his view the Committee faced a dilemma. There were differences in the quality of reports; and representatives who answered questions in person had their own constraints, such as political limitations or lack of information. They had a tendency to avoid answering questions or else their answers were often unconvincing. Some representatives said that the difficulties in their country were so great that the situation could not be improved; others hid behind religious dogma. But the Committee's questions also differed in quality, often lacking profundity. For example, it was not the Committee's concern to inquire into divorce statistics: divorce, after all, could be seen as good, in the sense that it denoted greater freedom in a country, or bad, in its effects on children. The Committee's real concern should be the consequences of divorce; it should, for example, attempt to establish what

safeguards existed to protect women and children. The dilemma facing the Committee, however, was that if its questions were more pertinent, even fewer Governments might attend than was currently the case. He wondered whether members of longer standing could suggest a solution.

4. The CHAIRPERSON agreed that divorce, and religious freedom, were not the Committee's direct concern. The question it had to address was rather whether minorities were affected and whether there was any discrimination against them. He added that in a report he had prepared for the United Nations General Assembly on the subject of the treaty bodies he had written that States would only take a Committee as seriously as it took itself. If the Committee adopted a relaxed attitude, Governments would take it at its own estimation. If it took a tougher approach, Governments would respect it.

5. Mr. RATTRAY said that a similar debate on the perennial dilemma facing the Committee had occurred some years earlier, when the Committee had been anxious to devise machinery which would enable it to get behind the formal representations and to find out what was happening on the ground. At that time it had laid down guidelines not only to determine the facts with greater depth and precision but also to encourage States to engage in a constructive dialogue. It was, he felt, a measure of the Committee's success in formulating searching questions that so few States had sent delegations. The dilemma remained, however; the Committee would have to decide whether it wanted to be seen as terrorizing Governments or whether it wanted to obtain reliable information. It was a fine balance, but he thought that a middle way was evolving. He could not be certain why some Governments had not appeared before the Committee, but when they did the Committee should be prepared with penetrating questions. He agreed with Mr. Simma that thought should be given to the formulation of questions. He suggested that Governments should be asked to provide written answers in advance so that when delegations were present the Committee could be more focused in its questioning.

6. The CHAIRPERSON applauded his remarks, adding that the members of the Committee on the Rights of the Child had a policy of introducing themselves to delegations in order to create a friendly atmosphere. He wondered whether that was feasible in the case of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

7. Mrs. BONOAN-DANDAN said that it would be helpful if the Committee could keep in mind some kind of mental balance-sheet, with columns marked "positive" and "negative", so that a deficiency in one area of human rights could be set against a virtue in another. She added that in its discussions with the Islamic Republic of Iran the Committee had strayed from its normal procedure: the direct asking and answering of questions had made for a lively debate. With regard to the Chairperson's remarks regarding religion, she was surprised that he seemed to ascribe so little importance to it, since religion played a major role in many cultures. Marriage practices - and therefore divorce - were also extremely significant.

8. The CHAIRPERSON, remarking that the United States and Haiti were the only Governments that had ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights but not the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, said that his intention had been to contrast the Committee's

mandate with that of the Human Rights Committee. The Human Rights Committee was directly concerned with religious freedom, whereas the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights dealt with it only indirectly, in so far as it affected cultural rights. He had not intended to downplay the importance of religious life.

9. Mr. SIMMA agreed with Mr. Rattray that the fact that States were staying away was a measure of the Committee's success; but States must be persuaded to attend and not feel terrorized. He believed that the Committee should give up its policy of putting all-embracing questions, but restrict itself to questions of particular relevance to a specific country. The current procedure involved States in an overwhelming amount of work: they received the Committee's guidelines and wrote their report; then they received a long list of issues to be addressed, which meant more work; following which they were subjected to another round of questions. He advocated a more structured, disciplined approach, whereby Governments would be asked to comment on their approach to each article in turn.

10. The CHAIRPERSON suggested that the Committee should think about the possibility of limiting the general reports required of States parties. He suggested that new States parties might be asked to provide a comprehensive report following the prescribed guidelines. Thereafter, instead of the five-yearly report now required, the pre-sessional working group should meet to focus on issues that gave cause for concern. The Committee would then request the State party involved to send experts on those issues to answer questions at the next session. States parties would be very relieved not to have to present such comprehensive reports as at present. Too many and too diverse questions were being put, and members of the Committee were thus unable to concentrate on any one sector. Moreover, it was all too easy for State party representatives to avoid giving detailed answers.

11. The new approach would greatly increase the importance of the pre-sessional working group and of the research carried out before the meeting of that Group. He hoped that the secretariat would be reformed after the World Conference on Human Rights, with a significant increase in staff to whose services the treaty-monitoring bodies should lay claim. Country researchers were needed to prepare detailed files on pressing issues for evaluation by the Committee, which could always call for a comprehensive report if it was considered to be necessary.

12. Mrs. KLEIN (Centre for Human Rights) said that it was true that when the representatives of States parties had to answer a long list of questions there was not much room for dialogue. The other treaty-monitoring bodies had decided to limit themselves to asking a cluster of questions at a time, if possible put by the member best qualified to do so. That procedure resulted in a more lively dialogue than waiting until all the questions had been answered by the representatives of the State party.

13. The Human Rights Committee had started off by putting a list of questions relevant to the articles of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, but had later realized that it would be more useful to pose first of

all the issues that raised concern in a given country and not to follow a routine order. That procedure also left more time to discuss the issues on which insufficient information was provided by the State party concerned.

14. The Centre for Human Rights did try to solicit information from non-governmental organizations, but those organizations did not cover the entire range of economic, social and cultural rights. There were hundreds of them, having competence on specific issues. The Centre for Human Rights had written to some 30 non-governmental organizations requesting information in connection with the reports scheduled for consideration at the present session, but had received no replies. In addition, the Centre for Human Rights had asked larger NGOs such as Amnesty International to place it on their mailing list. However the answer had been that information was already being sent to the Human Rights Committee, the Committee Against Torture and the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, and that it was difficult to find useful information on economic, social and cultural rights.

15. It was also difficult to reach national NGOs and find out which of them had useful information. What was needed was a network and a focal point, so that those NGOs could be told that their country was being considered at the United Nations and that they should provide relevant information.

16. The CHAIRPERSON said that non-governmental organizations received hundreds of requests for information, which they ignored. In his view the only solution would be for the Centre for Human Rights to develop an NGO liaison unit, building up a network. At present there was only one official in UNOG dealing with NGO-related matters.

17. Mrs. JIMENEZ BUTRAGUEÑO agreed that the Committee was asking States parties to provide too much information, and that in their written questions the members of the Committee should comply with the guidelines, so that the questions were uniform.

18. Moreover, it would be useful for a suitably qualified member of the Committee to ask questions on the various issues of concern to the Committee, for instance, housing, employment and so on.

19. The CHAIRPERSON recalled that the Committee had not been very enthusiastic about that idea in the past. However, the issues might be split up in some way, for instance by identifying four major issues or sets of issues as being of special interest, on which the discussion would be focused. That would result in an exchange on the lines of the one with the Islamic Republic of Iran, and further clarifications could be requested immediately.

20. Mr. GRISSA endorsed that approach. For instance, in the case of Canada, a country on which information was widely available, the Committee had received a great deal of information from NGOs. On the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Committee had been greatly assisted by the final report on the situation of human rights in that country by the Special Representative of the Commission on Human Rights (E/CN.4/1993/41). There had been collaboration between the representatives of the Canadian Government and those of the NGOs, but many countries did not allow NGOs to function, rejecting reports from

outside sources such as Amnesty International and alleging interference in their internal affairs. Since not all the members of the Committee could carry out research, someone should be appointed in coordination with the secretariat to pinpoint the main human rights issues facing a given country so that pertinent questions could be asked. In some countries, including his own, it was not easy to find information on certain countries on which, moreover, information was not widely available. In addition, some Governments wished to conceal their difficulties.

21. The CHAIRPERSON observed that one point involved was the ability of the Centre for Human Rights to draw upon other sources of United Nations information. Depressingly, the reports of specialized agencies were not always submitted to the Committee. The only way forward, therefore, was to have professional researchers based at the Centre for Human Rights who could develop an understanding of the sources available. It was indeed impossible for the members of the Committee to do that work themselves with countries with which they had no direct contact.

22. Mr. MARCHAN ROMERO said that the matter was basic to the Committee's work. The Committee must examine its own working methods. Initially it had asked States parties to answer an unreasonable number of questions. The establishment of the pre-sessional working group to examine States parties' reports and to list the issues that were not covered in them had been a great improvement in the Committee's practice. With the answers to those questions by the representative of the State party, a kind of dialogue had been established between the State party and the Committee. However, questions not contained in the list of issues created additional problems for States parties.

23. The Committee should therefore further refine its working methods by limiting the dialogue as far as possible to the issues raised by the pre-sessional working group. If it did not receive satisfactory answers, it could then embark on a dialogue with the representative of the State party, but that should be tied into the report and limited to the questions asked by the members of the pre-sessional working group.

24. Mr. Grissa's proposal that the pre-sessional working group should, in addition to drawing up a list of essential issues, draft a guideline paper drawing attention to the problems arising in the country concerned would have the advantage of providing a focused picture of the country.

25. Mr. SIMMA suggested that the time had come for the Committee to reflect on its own philosophy. Its theory on the purpose of reporting had been developed some years ago and its membership had now changed. Members should be aware that the Committee's aim was not to satisfy individual members' curiosity but to act as a catalyst in the countries concerned.

26. The Chairperson had always stressed that members of the Committee might ask any questions they considered relevant. Perhaps members should now exercise more discipline by keeping to the issues identified by the pre-sessional working group.

27. He therefore suggested that since it would take three to four years for Governments to become accustomed to any new approach, the Committee should take a decision at its next session to adopt a new approach.

28. The CHAIRPERSON said that he would prepare a short paper outlining possible new approaches for discussion the following week.

The meeting was suspended at 4.30 p.m., and resumed at 4.40 p.m.

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS (agenda item 5) (continued)

(a) REPORTS SUBMITTED BY STATES PARTIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLES 16 AND 17 OF THE COVENANT (continued)

Viet Nam (E/1990/5/Add.10) (continued)

29. Mr. NGUYEN LUONG (Viet Nam), replying to a question put by Mr. Alvarez Vita, said that young people did in fact predominate in the population pyramid. Regarding literacy rates, in 1979, 16,086,000 males (90 per cent) had been literate, and 1,620,000 (10 per cent) illiterate. In the same year, the figures for females had been 15,816,000 (84 per cent) and 3,816,000 (16 per cent) respectively. The total literacy rate had thus been 85 per cent. In 1989, 19,854,000 males had been literate (93 per cent: a 3 per cent increase); while the figure for females had been 20,512,000 (unchanged at 84 per cent). The total literacy rate had thus risen by 3 per cent in 10 years. However, it was a matter for concern that over the same period the number of illiterate women had risen from 3,817,000 to 3,854,000. Regarding the proportion of male to female illiterates, more than twice as many women as men were illiterate. Illiteracy was more prevalent in the remote mountainous provinces (in some of which it attained almost 50 per cent) than in the Mekong Delta.

30. Regarding Mr. Marchan Romero's question on population movements among job seekers, he explained that such seasonal transfers of labour between rural and urban areas were a traditional feature of the Vietnamese labour market. In an attempt to exploit the tradition as a means of mobilizing labour, the Government had established agencies to organize those labour flows so as to regulate seasonal labour shortages. All such movements were of course voluntary; and the duration of employment and remuneration were agreed between employer and employee.

31. In the past, his Government had been criticized for its policy of redistributing population to the New Economic Zones. It was true that in the years immediately after 1975 the policy had been applied in a haphazard fashion; however, it had since been properly organized. The purpose of the policy was not, as sometimes alleged, to inflict reprisals on collaborators with the former Saigon regime (for the policy was also applied in the north of the country) but simply to create jobs and improve living conditions by exploiting the resources of the land to the full. Participation in the redistributions was voluntary, and movements tended to be within a province or, at most, from one province to a neighbouring province, since the Government did not wish to sever workers' links with their traditional homelands.

32. Mr. Marchan Romero had also asked if employment of children under the age of 18 was permitted. The answer was in the affirmative. General education for those unable to pursue a baccalaureate course terminated at the age of 16, and experience had shown that denying school leavers employment for two years led to serious social problems, and that it was better that they should be gainfully employed. However, article 133 of the new Constitution stipulated that persons under the age of 18 could be employed only in a limited range of occupations compatible with the protection of their health and development; while the Ministry of Labour listed a number of categories of work prohibited for those under the age of 16. Article 134 of the Constitution limited the working week of persons between the ages of 16 and 18 to 42 hours, or 7 hours daily, and prohibited night work. Those conditions applied to urban areas. In rural areas, however, where labour was organized on a traditional family basis, it was not unusual for much younger children - perhaps as young as eight - to be employed in agricultural tasks as a contribution to the family economy.

33. In response to Mr. Texier's questions regarding the trade unions, he said that the new draft labour code contained four articles in that regard. Given that workers and peasants were regarded as the two fundamental components of society, the trade unions had an important say in all issues relating to workers' rights. Discussions must take place between unions and employers on all questions regarding workers' interests, and the unions even had the power to propose draft legislation in that regard. The trade unions were grouped together into the Viet Nam Confederation of Trade Unions, which was a member of the World Federation of Trade Unions. Concerning the right to strike, the press had recently carried reports of a strike by workers in a foreign-managed enterprise. The Vietnamese trade unions were in the process of asserting their rights, including the right to strike. No provision existed for that right under current labour legislation, but the labour code was currently in the process of being revised; furthermore, the Viet Nam Investment Review had called for such action on the part of workers to be supported.

34. It had been asked whether men continued to dominate women in the organization of the family. Such dominance was no longer guaranteed under the new Constitution. In practice, however, men continued to play a dominant role in society generally, because of the force of tradition, although women were often the guiding force in individual households. The problem was thus one of influencing public opinion.

35. Article 63 of the new Constitution guaranteed equal political, economic, cultural, social and family rights for male and female workers, and the State prohibited any discrimination against women and any acts prejudicial to their dignity. Equal remuneration for work of equal value was guaranteed. Female workers had the right to social benefits in connection with childbearing. In the light of the State's desire to promote family planning, the provisions concerning paid maternity leave had been amended: there was now entitlement to six months' paid maternity leave, but that entitlement was reduced to two and a half months from the third child onwards. In both cases, the entitlement was in any case greater than it had been under the previous Constitution.

36. With regard to family planning, while a vigorous campaign had been mounted, it was - as paragraph 70 of the report (E/1990/5/Add.10) pointed out - persuasive rather than coercive; and parents were free to have large families if they so wished. However, such conduct, though acceptable in rural areas, was likely to be frowned on in urban areas, and especially in large cities, where the trend was for parents to have only one child.

37. With regard to the future of the five year plan begun in 1986, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) considered that the plan had been very successfully implemented. UNICEF was now widely known in many parts of the country, especially in connection with its enlarged vaccination, sanitation and drinking water projects.

38. Turning to Mrs. Taya's questions, he said that in any industrialization programme it was high-technology projects rather than labour-intensive projects that counted. In such a climate, skilled labour and know-how were at a premium, and unskilled labour at a discount; and the State had a moderating role to play in ensuring that the most vulnerable sectors of the population were spared excessive hardship. Highly innovative income-generating projects had been set up in cooperation with local non-governmental organizations, and with international assistance. There was broad agreement that the most effective approach was to give the poor the tools enabling them to help themselves. Also effective was the Swedish method whereby loans granted were to be repaid once the income had been generated, for reinvestment in similar projects - a method that resulted in a multiplier effect.

39. The Government saw basic education as a decisive factor in long-term development. The latest round of educational reforms had the advantage of drawing on the experience of other countries of the region, such as Japan, Taiwan and the Republic of Korea. The Government was working to achieve a social redistribution on the basis of which Vietnamese's future leaders could be educated.

40. Regarding the questions put by Mrs. Ahodikpe, he wished to clarify his earlier statement. Schooling was free of charge for the first three grades of primary education; a small fee was charged for the fourth and fifth grades, in order to relieve the burden on the State budget. The objective, however, was provision of free schooling for all five grades of primary education. Schooling was compulsory in all five grades, which covered the 6 to 14 age group.

41. Regarding the use of children in drug trafficking, very serious penalties were imposed even where adults alone were concerned: the penalties would be more severe where exploitation of minors was involved. As yet, no cases had been recorded of the exploitation of children in pornography, but the State was exercising the utmost vigilance to ensure that the epidemic of sex tourism did not penetrate its borders.

42. With regard to the right of appeal, trade unions, and indeed citizens generally, were of course guaranteed the right to denounce State organs and agents, as well as economic and social organs, members of the armed forces and individuals violating regulations. In addition to the protection afforded by the trade unions, workers also had directly elected representatives to protect

their interests. Formerly, such complaints had been a rare occurrence. Now, since the launching by the Prime Minister of a campaign against State corruption, they had become much more frequent.

43. He confirmed that the rate of use of the complaints procedure in cases of corruption and abuse of power naturally depended on the effectiveness of the system and the will of the population to denounce such abuses.

44. The CHAIRPERSON asked whether the Committee should take it from the answer that detailed information was not available on the extent to which that procedure had been and was being used in relation to social and economic rights. Had it in fact been used, how often and in relation to what type of cases?

45. Mr. NGUYEN LUONG (Viet Nam) confirmed that the Vietnamese Government attached great importance to action against corruption and the abuse of power. Abuses were now denounced openly in the press and it was recognized that complaints could be brought before the courts. A new rule had been introduced setting a deadline for consideration of complaints in order to avoid any possibility of cases being left pending for long periods. It was true, however, that the situation was still evolving.

46. Mrs. AHODIKPE asked whether statistical data was available on how often complaints were made, their outcome, and whether citizens might be awarded compensation.

47. Mr. NGUYEN LUONG (Viet Nam) confirmed that provision existed for awarding compensation. Delays still occurred, however, in processing cases and efforts were being made to find ways of resolving them more promptly.

48. Concerning Mr. Grissa's question relating to debt repayments in roubles, he said that it should be borne in mind that the status of the nominally transferable rouble complicated the situation. The countries of the former Soviet Union still represented an important market for Viet Nam and efforts were under way to renegotiate the schedule of debt payments.

49. The question of unmarried mothers was a relatively recent phenomenon in Viet Nam but society had come to accept it and women's associations had been set up to defend their interests.

50. Concerning the establishment of non-governmental organizations in the country, a wide range of associations for different groups such as young people, women, rural workers and others, already existed, together with a large number of charitable organizations, particularly in the provinces. The population had therefore already mobilized to provide assistance to vulnerable groups such as disabled children and needy families. The introduction of new criteria to encourage the establishment of local non-governmental organizations with which non-governmental organizations from other countries could work was therefore regarded as a way of broadening the scope of such activities.

51. Mr. GRISSA requested clarification on the relationship between the country's political party and trade union organizations, and the possibility of a trade union adopting a position not necessarily in line with Party directives.

52. Mr. NGUYEN LUONG (Viet Nam) pointed out that the Party and its members must act within the terms of the law. Any conflict of interest had therefore to be regulated within that context.

53. Mr. GRISSA requested further clarification about the realities of the situation in which, for example, members of trade unions were also members of the Party and conflicts of interest might consequently arise.

54. Mr. NGUYEN LUONG (Viet Nam) said that representatives of trade unions were elected to office by the workers. Members of the National Assembly were also appointed by election and there had been cases where Party members were not elected to the National Assembly and where members of the National Assembly were not members of the Party. The population had become accustomed to electing candidates in the light of their competence. At the same time, it was true that the Party still had a great deal of influence. However, should a case arise where party directives were not in line with workers' interests, the matter could be raised and examined as the Party was obliged to act within the law and to protect workers' interest. Moreover, the Vietnamese National Assembly was currently examining draft legislation on the organization of the Government and the legal system, which would be published and open to public discussion prior to adoption. It was important, therefore, to take into account the evolution in the situation in Viet Nam.

55. Mr. GRISSA requested further information concerning the application of the law in cases where, for example, a trade union might act against the will of the Party.

56. Mr. NGUYEN LUONG (Viet Nam) observed that the question of the extent to which legislation was applied in reality was a general one and not specific to Viet Nam. The stage had been reached in his country where it was clear that the Party's activities must be conducted within the framework of the law.

57. Mr. GRISSA asked whether there might be cases where the Party, without violating the law, might either directly or indirectly influence the decisions of trade unions - in cases of strike action for example.

58. Mr. NGUYEN LUONG (Viet Nam) drew attention to the need to take into account the historical context of Viet Nam. It must be recognized that the Party had led the country to independence and renewal, that it had averted extreme suffering during the period of transition, and that legal instruments had been introduced regulating the National Assembly and the system of Government. He himself was optimistic that the process would be an ongoing one and that such evolution would be increasingly reflected in practice as time went by.

59. Turning to Mr. Texier's questions, he said that he wished to clarify a point made in his earlier statement: the first three years, and not the totality, of primary education were free of charge. On the question of

divorce, the rate was increasing in urban areas and there were cases where the decisions of the court had not been respected by individuals. Public opinion and mass organizations were being mobilized in order to ensure that the rights of the child were respected in that context.

60. The new Constitution and new legislation provided for the right to housing and protected the interests of both the landlord and the tenant, inter alia, by the introduction of a model contract to be signed by both parties. The principle of home ownership was acknowledged except of course where there was evidence of fraudulent acquisition of property, such as through corruption or bribery. Article 62 of the new Constitution stipulated that every citizen had the right to build his own house and while that provision might appear on paper to be a backward step in comparison with the previous constitutional provision which stipulated that every citizen had the right to housing, it had the merit of being realistic.

61. In response to a question from Mrs. Bonoan-Dandan, he said that human rights teaching was not included in the school curriculum but that extracurricular talks and lectures were organized in educational institutes. Some difficulties were still being encountered in the translation and dissemination of human rights material, but it was hoped that assistance might be forthcoming. Priority was being given to the training of trainers in order to promote familiarity with human rights instruments within the police and armed forces.

62. In response to the question concerning the situation of minors and disabled persons, he said that national and foreign non-governmental organizations were providing assistance to offer educational and cultural activities to disabled children and that efforts were being made to ensure that the rights of such disadvantaged groups were recognized.

63. Concerning Mrs. Jimenez Butragueño's question about the wage differential, he referred to his earlier comments and emphasized the fact that the differential had been made greater solely in the interests of effectiveness and to provide incentives in the current period of economic transition.

64. Concerning the ratification of the International Covenants, their provisions had been examined in depth and no disparities between them and existing domestic legislation had been identified. Moreover, it was the will of the Vietnamese Government to improve conditions further in order to create the material, physical, institutional and legal conditions to ensure that such international instruments would be increasingly and more fully implemented in his country.

65. The CHAIRPERSON thanked the delegation of Viet Nam for replying to the questions put by members and for entering into a promising dialogue with the Committee.

The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.